DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 188 423 EC 124 383

AUTHOR Thurmon, Christine
TITLE EXTEND: Exercises to Encourage Develcpment. A Program of Parent Invclvement.
PUB DATE Apr 80
NOTE 6p.: Paper presented at the Annual International Convention of The Ccuncil for Exceptional Children (58th, Philadelphia, PA, April, 1980, Session B-2).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Disabilities: Early Childhood Education: *Home Programs: *Parent Participation: Prevention: Program Descripticns: Program Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS Exercises to Encourage Development Program

ABSTRACT

The Exercises to Encourage Development (EXTEND) Program for developmentally delayed students is described and evaluatien results presented. Designed tc provide attention to the child with developmental lags in the areas of mctor skills, perceptual sensations, cr expressive-receptive language, the program attempts to prevent potential academic problems. EXTEND provides materials and lesson plans for specific tasks to be completed by the child under the directicn of the parent, and requires cngoing communication and evaluation between the parents and the coordinator. A 2 year study of the program, invclving approximately 75 students each year, appeared to substantiate the program objective that specifically guided intervention would provide significant growth and help facilitate long range changes in the parent-child relationship. (Author/CI)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED188423

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Christine Thurmon
10705 Forest Circle Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63128

# EXTEND:
# EXERCISES TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT

## A PROGRAM OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

It is the common goal of educators to provide individual educational programs directed toward dealing with each child's specific needs. Reaching this goal requires utilization of various community and school resources, as well as developing a means of identification and specialized teaching methods. EXTEND is one program which is currently attempting to address this goal through the utilization of parent involvement.

The program EXTEND was initially developed to satisfy the needs of a specific type of student. This child functions adequately within the classroom setting, but exhibits indications of developmental lags in the areas of motor skills, perceptual sensations, or expressive-receptive language. In the modern school setting, we have created extensive programs directed towards remediation of problems that have reached the point of interfering with the student's academic progress. However, due to various difficulties such as staff shortages, budget restrictions, and curriculum demands we frequently are unable to devote adequate attention to the prevention of potential academic problems. EXTEND was structured to address itself to the needs of this child, as well as realizing and attempting to deal with the limitations and restrictions of the school staff.

EXTEND utilizes the home as the implementor of the program, and though it requires a considerable expenditure of time and effort on the part of the teacher to initially gather and coordinate the materials, once begun the program takes only minimal monitoring.

Children are initially referred to the program by classroom teachers who have noted a particular academic or developmental weakness. At that point, a developmental skills screening is administered to assess needs. Because of the wide range of ages and potential areas of concern, numerous testing devices and examiners are utilized. Developmental screenings, various reading inventories, specific learning disabilities tests, and language samples are included in the testing repertoire. Following the evaluation, a conference is held with the classroom teacher, parents, and examiner to discuss the identified areas of concern; how these weaknesses might interfere with academic functioning; and the creation of an educational plan for dealing with weaknesses.

The EXTEND Program begins with a general meeting of the participants - parents, teachers, and the coordinator. The first meeting is devoted to the mechanics of the program: sample lessons, techniques of parent-child relationships, and familiarizing the group with the materials being utilized. Subsequent meetings, held every other month, deal with topics of interest and defined requirements of the group. On alternating months, a newsletter is distributed to the participating parents.

EC124383

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Christine Thurmon
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The newsletters and meetings are an integral part of the entire EXTEND Program. These contacts provide an essential network of communication, reinforcement, and feedback that is vital for the participating parents, as well as the coordinator. The materials and meeting discussions deal with such topics as parent assertiveness and appropriate discipline techniques, in addition to descriptions and explanations of specific areas of difficulty encountered in the classroom by their children. The real essence of the meetings, however, is in giving the parents an opportunity to discuss their children and their own unique experiences with other interested parents. This sharing is a reassuring activity for the parents. They realize that the situations they undergo are relatively common with the group. They receive new ideas and solutions for problems, and reinforcement for the skills and techniques they possess.

The program provides materials and lesson plans for specific tasks to be completed by the child under the direction of the parent. Time limits and the amount of work are determined by the age of the child and his involvement. Some of the areas covered by the program include: motor skills, language, reading, mathematics, plus visual and auditory perceptual training.

The materials are gathered from different sources, with the emphasis on game activities which can be adapted to educational experiences. Because of the need to restrict expenditures, many of the activities can possibly be gleaned from discarded texts and workbooks, as well as specific materials from libraries or resource centers. It has always been a source of amazement to discover the vast supply of materials, kits, games, and programs which are unused in our schools. The principle feature which causes this neglect is the material's difficulty in being utilized as an independent activity, or as a group task. These debits in the eyes of the classroom teacher, become assets to an individualized program which has structure and monitoring by the parents as an integral segment. The educational games and activities that devised for two or more players provide an opportunity for the child to interact with his parents, and a reinforcement for a task or skill introduced at an earlier time.

Each child is given a program that is specifically designed and sequenced for his developmental problem. When the packets are first assembled, a sequence of steps are determined, and objectives and goals are defined which can be used to show growth and achievement of the various sequential steps. Though a full series is developed for a problem area, such as fine motor control, it is not necessary for a child to complete the full program. For example, if there are sixteen lessons for fine motor control, a student would have the option of completing the entire group, starting at some point other than the first packet, or skipping certain steps within the sequence. To illustrate the pattern of steps within a series, the area of fine motor control can be used as an example. The following is a sequence of steps that would be found within the series:

1) Manipulation of objects
   - clay objects
   - sewing cards
   - pick-up sticks
   - jacks

2) Reproduction and handling of design materials
   - parquetry
   - peg boards
   - simple puzzles
   - legos
3) Extensions of hand manipulation
   - scissor cutting
   - magic markers and crayons
   - pencils
4) Writing
   - reproduction of letter patterns
   - spacing exercises
   - words and phrases

Within the series, if it was necessary to provide additional repetition at a particular level of development, varying activities and games directed to that level or skill would be provided until the child was able to successfully complete the established objective, and thus move on to the next step.

Two sets of manila envelopes were utilized in the program. The first contained the actual lesson, directions, materials to complete the lesson, and summary sheet. It was quickly discovered that few homes have at their disposal such items as paper, pencils, scissors, glue, paper clips, or rubber bands. Because of this, the lessons in the packets were considered completely self-contained.

On the front of the packet was placed the name of the lesson, the sequential number within the series (series B, lesson #5 would be shown as B-5), and a complete list of the contents. This listing was as much a convenience for the parents as for the coordinator, as it assisted both parties in keeping track of the packet items.

The lesson explanation and directions must be carefully and simply written. This step is by far the most difficult and time consuming task of the program. The parents are generally hesitant and unsure of their ability, and when faced with the possibility of misinterpreting a set of directions, they will frequently choose to return the packet uncompleted with an accompanying note stating that they were unsure of how to proceed. The general rule used by this coordinator has been that directions are to be written no higher than fourth grade level. The participating parents, through experience, have been shown to be most comfortable and secure with this type of packet directions.

The summary sheet included in the weekly packet provided another opportunity for ongoing communication and evaluation between the parents and the coordinator. A check list was used for ease of completion and referred to such items as: time intervals used to finish tasks, who worked with child on the packet, performance level of lesson, most difficult and easiest area as viewed by the parent. Space was allotted for comments by either party to express concerns or positive statements on growth and achievement.

The materials are laminated whenever feasible, and the inner packet is placed within another larger packet for further safeguards against the weather and normal wear of being carried between home and school.

A two year research study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the EXTEND Program. They compared, by means of the T Test, the yearly growth patterns in basic learning skills and social adaptation of kindergarten students in this program with other sample groups. Participants in the study were initially given the Missouri Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills during the first month of Kindergarten. Based upon test scores and teacher evaluations, ten percent of the class was selected for further diagnostic screenings. The total group of approximately seventy-five children each school year were divided into three groups for the study - sample, control, and placebo. The control group took part in no special program, but participated in the normal Kindergarten curriculum. The sample group utilized the study packets, and parent involvement in addition to the regular curriculum. A placebo group was given services from a high school cadet student in the form of general attention. This attention included such activities as pleasure reading or playing games, and was offered at the same rate of time as the packets in the sample group.

The students were given pre and post tests with the Meeting Street School Screening Test. The test results were as follows:

| | GROSS-FINE MOTOR | | | | VISUAL MOTOR | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROGRAM | 1977-78 | | 1978-79 | | 1977-78 | | 1978-79 | |
| | START | END | START | END | START | END | START | END |
| EXTEND | 10.39 | 11.87 | 9.15 | 12.54 | 9.26 | 10.56 | 8.88 | 10.81 |
| GAIN | 1.48 | | 3.38 | | 1.3 | | 1.93 | |
| N | 23 | | 26 | | 23 | | 26 | |
| SD | 2.11 | | 1.89 | | 2.26 | | 2.27 | |
| T*(E vs C) | 3.31 | | -5.59 | | 2.54 | | -3.88 | |
| CONTROL | 10.54 | 10.20 | 9.83 | 9.33 | 9.88 | 9.71 | 9.28 | 8.44 |
| GAIN | -.33 | | -.5 | | -.17 | | -.84 | |
| N | 24 | | 18 | | 24 | | 18 | |
| SD | 1.61 | | 2.71 | | 1.68 | | 2.35 | |
| T*(C vs P) | -.36 | | -.49 | | -.19 | | -.06 | |
| PLACEBO | 11.14 | 11.05 | 10.63 | 9.69 | 9.64 | 9.59 | 9.75 | 8.88 |
| GAIN | -.09 | | -.94 | | -.05 | | -.87 | |
| N | 22 | | 16 | | 22 | | 16 | |
| SD | 2.81 | | 2.48 | | 2.52 | | 2.65 | |
| T*(E vs P) | 2.13 | | -6.35 | | 1.89 | | -3.63 | |

T* NO ARROW = N.S., P>.10
T* --------→ = P<.05
T* -o-o-o-o-o-o→ = P<.10
T* ——————→ = P<.01

| PROGRAM | LANGUAGE 1977-78 START | LANGUAGE 1977-78 END | LANGUAGE 1978-79 START | LANGUAGE 1978-79 END | TOTAL TEST RESULTS 1977-78 START | TOTAL TEST RESULTS 1977-78 END | TOTAL TEST RESULTS 1978-79 START | TOTAL TEST RESULTS 1978-79 END |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EXTEND | 7.96 | 9.35 | 8.12 | 9.96 | 47.00 | 53.13 | 45.15 | 55.65 |
| GAIN | | 1.39 | | 1.85 | | 6.13 | | 10.5 |
| N | | 23 | | 26 | | 23 | | 26 |
| SD | | 1.90 | | 1.78 | | 4.52 | | 5.24 |
| T*(E vs C) | | 1.74 | | -4.92 | | 3.68 | | -7.9 |
| CONTROL | 8.95 | 9.46 | 8.67 | 7.39 | 49.00 | 49.75 | 47.39 | 44.50 |
| GAIN | | .5 | | -1.28 | | .75 | | -2.89 |
| N | | 24 | | 18 | | 24 | | 18 |
| SD | | 1.59 | | 2.44 | | 5.44 | | 5.93 |
| T*(C vs P) | | .29 | | 1.36 | | .53 | | -.02 |
| PLACEBO | 9.45 | 9.82 | 8.63 | 8.50 | 51.18 | 51.09 | 49.56 | 46.63 |
| GAIN | | .36 | | -.13 | | -.09 | | -2.94 |
| N | | 22 | | 16 | | 22 | | 16 |
| SD | | 1.71 | | 2.47 | | 5.26 | | 7.57 |
| T*(E vs P) | | 1.91 | | -3.01 | | 4.26 | | -6.80 |

T* NO ARROW = N.S., P>.10
T* --------→ = P<.05
T* -0-0-0-0-0-0→ = P<.10
T* ——————→ = P<.01

The EXTEND results indicate significant gains in comparison to the other two groups. This is shown particularly in the second year of the study. The EXTEND T Test results disclose all developmental areas to be highly significant (P<.01) in test gains as compared to the Control and the Placebo groups.

Though the scores of the first period of the two year study revealed distinctive growth for the EXTEND group, this growth is diminished by the exceptional gains evidenced during the second year. Since the program structure and testing remained essentially constant, an explanation for the variation might lie in the psychological and emotional disposition of the participants. One might speculate over the possibility that a sense of security and confidence in their ability to function appropriately in the program, might have transmitted itself to their child, thus culminating in significantly higher scores.

The total study results would appear to substantiate the program objective that specifically guided intervention with developmentally immature children can provide significant growth. In addition, this type of intervention, which utilizes the home, helps facilitate long-range alterations in the parent-child relationship, as well as provide a model for structuring future appropriate learning experiences.